

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07
/098 W

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P 151555Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3910
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6349

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, LY
SUBJECT: CAIRO'S ANTI-LIBYAN CAMPAIGN

1. GOE AND EGYPTIAN MEDIA APRIL 15 KEEP UP PRESSURE ON QADHAFI.

2. LIBYAN RESIDENTS IN EGYPT. DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SEEN UPI STORY QUOTING LIBYAN EMBASSY SPOKESMAN AS CONFIRMING EXISTENCE BAN ON TRAVEL OF ALL LIBYAN NATIONALS CURRENTLY IN EGYPT. UPI BUREAU CHIEF TELLS US THAT, WHILE OTHER LIBYAN DIPLOMATS REFUSING COMMENT, HE ABLE ELICIT FROM EMBASSY COUNSELOR FOLLOWING STORY: AFTER LIBYAN DIPLOMATIC COURIER HAD BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION BOARD

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FLIGHT AT CAIRO AIRPORT (PROBABLY APRIL 12), LIBYAN AMBASSADOR GHOKA TELEPHONED MFA (LEVEL UNSPECIFIED) TO INQUIRE IF THERE IS BAN IN FORCE. MFA OFFICIAL CONFIRMED THAT BAN EXISTS AND APPLIES ALSO TO DIPLOMATS, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR GHOKA. LIBYAN COUNSELOR TOLD UPI EGYPTIANS FREE TO LEAVE LIBYA, BUT REFUSED FURTHER COMMENT.

3. POLCOUNS CONFIRMED AT CAIRO AIRPORT EVENING OF APRIL

14 LIBYANS ARE NOT PERMITTED EMBARK ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS. RELIABLE PRESS SOURCES TELL US BAN IS ALSO STRICTLY APPLIED IN ALEXANDRIA. (AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA IS CHECKING BUS STATIONS AND PORT).

4. CURIOUSLY, GOE IS PERMITTING FOREIGN JOURNALISTS FILE STORIES ON BAN BUT HAS NOT PERMITTED ANY MENTION OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY MEASURE IN LOCAL MEDIA.

5. MEANWHILE, LOCAL NEWSPAPERS APRIL 15 KEEP UP DRUM FIRE OF CRITICISM OF QADHAFI, ADDING NEW CHARGES:

(A) ANNEXATION OF SIWA. EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE HAS DISCOVERED NEW LIBYAN PLANT O ANNEX SIWA OASIS (WHICH IS JUST EAST OF BORDER). "A NUMBER OF SIWA TRIBESMEN" HAVE ADMITTED UNDER INTERROGATION THEY WERE RECRUITED AND GIVEN MILITARY TRAINING "BY QADHAFI" TO CREATE "WAVE OF CONFUSION AND CHAOS IN SIWA AREA." OTHER TRIBESMEN WILL BE CHARGED WITH CAUSING EXPLOSION AT A PETROL STATION IN MERSA METRUH.

(B) QADHAFI FINANCES SOVIET TANKS FOR ETHIOPIA. "DIPLOMATIC SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED", AHRAM CHARGES, THAT ETHIOPIA RECENTLY RECEIVED 40 SOVIET TANKS PAID FOR BY QADHAFI "OUT OF LIBYAN PEOPLES' FUNDS."

(C) SOVIET BASE AT MASSAWA. AHRAM CHARGES THAT THERE ARE "SECRET CONTACTS" NOW OCCURRING BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND USSR TO GRANT NAVAL FACILITIES TO SOVIETS AT MASSAWA ON ERITREAN COAST. AHRAM OBSERVES THIS IS PART OF NEW SOVIET PLAN FOR RED SEA.

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6. GAMASY WARNING. DEPRIMIN/MINWAR GAMASY, SPEAKING AT MILITARY ACADEMY GRADUATION CEREMONY APRIL 14, IS LATEST OF SENIOR GOE OFFICIALS TO WARN AGAINST LIBYA, HE SAID EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES ARE WATCHING CAREFULLY THE CONSPIRACIES DEVELOPING ON EGYPT'S WESTERN BORDER.

7. EDITORIALS. GUMHURIYYA LAMENTS "PROVOCATIVE DEMONSTRATIONS ORCHESTRATED BY COL. QADHAFI", BUT AFFIRMS THAT IT IS QADHAFI'S REGIME, NOT EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN FRIENDLY RELATIONS, WHICH IS SUFFERING. QADHAFI "HAS LOST HIS ROOTS" AND HAS NOTHING LEFT TO SUPPORT HIM OTHER THAN HIS INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS.

8. COMMENT: PRESUMABLY THERE IS MORE BEHIND TRAVEL BAN THAN CHRONIC GOE CONCERN ABOUT WELFARE 250,000 EGYPTIAN NATIONAL IN LIBYA. PERHAPS ANSWER LIES IN ACCURACY OF PRESS REPORTS CHARGING LIBYANS NOT ONLY OCCUPYING EGYPTIAN CONSULATE IN BANGHAZI BUT ALSO HOLDING STAFF OF EGYPT'S

BENGHAZI CONSULATE. IF CAIRO BELIEVES EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS
BEING HELD AS VIRTUAL "PRISONERS", MWASURE MAY BE INTENDED
ENSURE THEIR WELFARE.

9. AS ADDRESSEES AWARE, SADAT VIEWS CONTINUING EXISTENCE
QADHAFI REGIME AS THREAT TO EGYPT AND TO ME AND AFRICAN
STABILITY AND AS A DANGER TO ME PEACE EFFORT. BAN ON
LIBYAN TRAVEL AND STRIDENCY OF EGYPTIAN PRESS ARE,
OBVIOUSLY, STRONG SIGNALS TO TRIPOLI THAT EGYPTIAN
PATIENCE WEARING THIN. SINGALLING IS SOMEWHAT
ONCONCISIENT, GIVEN FACT TRAVE BAN NOT PUBLISHED LOCALLY,
BUT THIS MAY SIMPLY BE MATTER OF TIME AND TIMING. EGYPTIANS
ARE ALREADY ANGERED BY ATTACK ON BENGHAZI CONSULATE. IF
DIPLOMATS ARE IN FACT BEING HELD UNDER VIRTUAL HOUSE
ARREST, EGYPTIAN PUBLIC OPINION WILL COME TO BOIL, AS
IT DID LAST AUGUST AFTER BOMBING IN CAIRO AND ALEXANDRIA.

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10. AMBASSADOR WILL SEE FONMIN FAHMY APRIL 16 AND WILL
ASK FOR LATEST GOE ASSESSMENT LIBYAN SITUATION. EILTS

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